

Serial No. 09/300,544

Patent**REMARKS**

Applicants would like to thank Examiner Mulcahy for extending the courtesy of a personal interview on October 29, 2003.

Claims 1-32 are in the case.

New claims 31 and 32 have been added as dependent claims. Support for the new claims can be found in the original disclosure, e.g., on page 4, lines 3-5 of the specification.

Claims 1-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over WO97/33921.

Applicants submit that the present invention was conceived and reduced to practice prior to September 18, 1997--the International publication date of the WO97/33921 reference. Applicants will submit the Declaration under 37 C.F.R. 1.131 as soon as the signature for the Declaration from a departed inventor can be obtained.

Respectfully submitted,

Date : 12/23/03

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